

**DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS**

**Greater Hoyt School District
Continuous Improvement Monitoring Process Report 2004-2005**

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Date of Report: January 5, 2005

This report contains the results of the steering committee's self-assessment and the validation of the self-assessment by Special Education Programs. The report addresses six principles – General Supervision, Free Appropriate Public Education, Appropriate Evaluation, Procedural Safeguards, Individualized Education Program and Least Restrictive Environment. Each principle is rated based on the following scale:

Promising Practice	The district/agency exceeds this requirement through the implementation of innovative, high-quality programming and instructional practices.
Meets Requirements	The district/agency consistently meets this requirement.
Needs Improvement	The district/agency has met this requirement but has identified areas of weakness that left unaddressed may result in non-compliance.
Out of Compliance	The district/agency consistently does not meet this requirement.
Not applicable	In a small number of cases, the standard may not be applicable for your district/agency. If an item is not applicable, the steering committee should briefly explain why the item is NA. Example – no private schools within the district boundaries.

Principle 1 – General Supervision
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General supervision means the school district's administrative responsibilities to ensure federal and state regulations are implemented and a free appropriate public education is provided for each eligible child with a disability. The specific areas addressed in principle one are child find, referral procedures, children voluntarily enrolled by parents in private schools, students placed by the school district, improving results through performance goals and indicators (assessment, drop out, graduation), professional development, suspension and expulsion rates.

Steering Committee Self-Assessment Summary

Data sources used:

- Surveys of parents
- Surveys of regular education teachers
- Surveys of special education teachers
- Surveys of special education students
- District policy manual

- Area Education Agency personnel
- Individual education programs
- student records

Meets requirements

The steering committee concluded the district has implemented an ongoing child find system to locate, identify, and evaluate children with disabilities, age's birth through 21 years. An effective pre-referral and referral system is in place to ensure students are identified without unnecessary delay and there are no private schools in the district. The district uses data-based decision-making procedures to review and analyze school district-level data to determine if progress is being made toward the state's performance goals and indicators. Students with disabilities are not suspended for more than 10 days per year. If it became necessary to do so, they would be provided FAPE.

Needs improvement

The steering committee concluded general educators need to have more input into the identification of staff development needs and the planning of activities related to students with disabilities. General educators also indicated a need to have adequate training, information, and supports to implement student IEPs.

Validation Results

Meets requirements

The monitoring team agrees with the areas identified as meeting the requirements for general supervision as concluded by the steering committee.

Through interview, the monitoring team concluded that staff development, information and supports needed to implement student IEPs meets requirements. General educators stated they provide input into their training needs every spring through a needs assessment process. Teachers who will be working with students with specific disabilities receive individual training to meet the student's needs. The communication between the special education staff and general education staff was considered by the teachers to be excellent. Teachers are provided with all the information necessary for students with disabilities to access the general curriculum.

Principle 2 – Free Appropriate Public Education

All eligible children with disabilities are entitled to a free appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment. The specific areas addressed in principle two are the provision of FAPE to children residing in group homes, foster homes, or institutions, making FAPE available when a child reaches his/her 3rd birthday and providing FAPE to eligible children with disabilities who have been suspended or expelled from school for more than 10 cumulative days.

Steering Committee Self-Assessment Summary

Data sources used:

- Surveys of parents
- Surveys of regular education teachers
- Surveys of special education teachers
- Surveys of special education students
- District policy manual
- Area Education Agency personnel

- Individual education programs
- student records

Meets requirements

The steering committee concluded a free appropriate public education (FAPE) is provided to all eligible children with disabilities. Should eligible children with disabilities be suspended or expelled from school for more than ten cumulative school days, they would be provided FAPE.

Validation Results

Meets requirements

Through interview and a review of student records the monitoring team agrees with the areas identified as meeting the requirements for free appropriate public education as concluded by the steering committee.

Principle 3 – Appropriate Evaluation

A comprehensive evaluation is conducted by a team of knowledgeable staff, which also includes parental input. A valid and reliable evaluation will result in effective individualized education programs for eligible students. The specific areas addressed in principle three are written notice and consent for evaluation, evaluation procedures and instruments, eligibility determination, reevaluation and continuing eligibility.

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Data sources used:

- Surveys of parents
- Surveys of regular education teachers
- Surveys of special education teachers
- Surveys of special education students
- District policy manual
- Area Education Agency personnel
- Individual education programs
- student records

Meets requirements

The steering committee concluded written notice and informed consent is obtained before assessments are administered to a child as part of an evaluation or reevaluation. Evaluation procedures and instruments meet the minimum requirements and the district ensures the proper identification of students with disabilities through the evaluation process. Reevaluations are conducted in accordance with all procedural requirements to ensure students are appropriately evaluated for continued eligibility.

Validation Results

Meets requirements

Through interview and a review of student records the monitoring team agrees that written notice and informed consent is obtained before assessments are administered to a child as part of an evaluation or reevaluation. Evaluation procedures and instruments meet the minimum requirements. Reevaluations are conducted in accordance with all procedural requirements.

Out of compliance

ARSD 24:05:22:03. Certified child

A certified child is a child in need of special education or special education and related services who has received a multidisciplinary evaluation and has an individual education program formulated and approved by a local placement committee. Documentation supporting a child's disabling condition as defined by Part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act must be maintained by the school district for verification of its annual federal child count. This definition applies to all eligible children ages 3 to 21, inclusive, and to only those children under the age of 3 who are in need of prolonged assistance.

ARSD 24:05:25:04. Evaluation procedures.

School districts shall ensure, at a minimum, that evaluation procedures include the following:

(7) The child is assessed in all areas related to the suspected disability, including, as applicable, health, vision, hearing, social and emotional status, general intelligence, academic performance, communicative status, and motor abilities.

ARSD 24:05:24:01:09. Developmental delay defined

A student three, four, or five years old may be identified as a student with a disability if the student has one of the major disabilities listed in § 24:05:24:01:01 or if the student experiences a severe delay in development.

ARSD 24:05:25:04.02. Determination of needed evaluation data

As part of an initial evaluation, if appropriate, the individual education program team required by § 24:05:27:01.01 and other individuals with knowledge and skills necessary to interpret evaluation data, determine whether the child has a disability, and determine whether the child needs special education and related services, as appropriate, shall:

(2) Based on the above review and input from the student's parents, identify what additional data, if any, are needed to determine:

- (a) Whether the student has a particular category of disability as described in this article;
- (b) The present levels of performance and educational needs of the student; and
- (c) Whether the student needs special education and related services.

ARSD 24:05:25:06. Reevaluations

Reevaluations shall be conducted at least every three years or if conditions warrant or if the child's parent or teacher requests an evaluation. Reevaluations must be completed within 25 school days after receipt by the district of signed consent to reevaluate unless other time limits are agreed to by the school administration and the parents. Each school district shall follow the procedures under § 24:05:25:04.02 when reevaluating a student for the additional purposes of:

(1) Determining whether the child continues to have a disability.

Through interview and a review of student records the monitoring team revealed a student who was identified on the district 2003 child count as developmentally delayed. The student turned six years old on September 1, 2004 and has not been reevaluated to determine the appropriate disability category. This student has been placed on the December 2004 child count under the category of multiple disabilities with visual and orthopedic impairments. Documentation supporting this disabling condition as defined by Part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act is not available in this student's file for verification of its annual federal child count.

Principle 4 – Procedural Safeguards

Parents of children with disabilities have certain rights available. The school makes parents aware of these rights and makes sure they are understood. The specific areas addressed in principle four are adult student/transfer of rights, content of rights, consent, written notice, confidentiality and access to records, independent educational evaluation (IEE), complaint procedures, and due process hearings.

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Meets requirements

The steering committee concluded that parents are informed of their parental rights under Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). Parents are fully informed of all information relevant to the activity for which consent is sought and the rights of a child are protected if no parent can be identified. The district provides parents the opportunity to inspect and review the special education procedure manual and all educational records of their child. Policies and procedures are in place for responding to complaint actions and requests for due process hearings.

Validation Results

Meets requirements

Through interview and a review of student records the monitoring team agrees with the areas identified as meeting the requirements for procedural safeguards as concluded by the steering committee.

Principle 5 – Individualized Education Program

The Individualized Education Program (IEP) is a written document for a child with a disability that is developed, reviewed and revised by the IEP team, which includes the parent. The specific areas addressed in principle five are IEP team, IEP content, transition components for secondary IEPs, annual reviews, transition from early intervention program, and IEP related issues.

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Data sources used:

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- Surveys of special education students
- District policy manual
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- Individual education programs
- student records

Meets requirements

The steering committee concluded that written notice is provided for all IEP meetings and includes all required content. The IEP team is comprised of the appropriate team membership and meets all identified responsibilities. The IEP contains all required content and transition plans for students are a coordinated set of activities, reflecting student strengths and interests, to prepare them for post school activities. The

district has policies and procedures in place to ensure an appropriate IEP is developed and in effect for each eligible student.

Validation Results

Meets requirements

Through interview and a review of student records the monitoring team agrees that written notice is provided for all IEP meetings and includes all required content. The IEP team is comprised of the appropriate team membership and meets all identified responsibilities. The district has policies and procedures in place to ensure an appropriate IEP is developed and in effect for each eligible student.

Out of compliance

ARSD 24:05:27:01.03. Content of individualized education program

Each student's individualized education program shall include:

- (8) For each student beginning at age 14 or younger if determined appropriate by the placement committee, and updated annually, a statement of the transition service needs of the student under the applicable components of the student's individualized education program that focuses on the student's course of study such as participation in advanced-placement courses or a vocational education program;
- (9) For each student beginning at age 16 or younger, if determined appropriate by the placement committee, a statement of the needed transition services, as defined in § 24:05:27:13.02, including, as applicable, interagency responsibilities or any needed linkages;

ARSD 24:05:27:13.02. Transition services. Transition services are a coordinated set of activities for a student, designed within an outcome-oriented process, which promotes movement from school to post-school activities, including postsecondary education, vocational training, integrated employment (including supported employment), continuing and adult education, adult services, independent living, or community participation. The coordinated set of activities shall be based on the individual student's needs, taking into account the student's preferences and interests, and shall include instruction, related services, community experiences, the development of employment and other post-school adult living objectives, and, if appropriate, acquisition of daily living skills and functional vocational evaluation.

Through a review of student records, a course of study was not documented in the IEP for a student 16 years old. The IEP only contained the statement, "...will take general courses in the regular curriculum when appropriate. (The student) will participate in the general education exploratory class involving exploration of career choices and awareness." The team could not find evidence that this student has ever been evaluated to determine their transition needs. The IEP did not reflect a coordinated set of activities which promotes movement from school to post-school activities. Through interview, the team was informed of a variety of district programs and services available to student of transition age however, this IEP contained only a single goal for the student to develop an awareness of occupations that may be of interest to him.

Principle 6 – Least Restrictive Environment

After the IEP is developed or reviewed, the IEP team must decide where the IEP services are to be provided. Consideration begins in the general education classroom for school age students. The specific areas addressed in principle six are placement decisions, consent for initial placement, least restrictive environment procedures, preschool children, and LRE related issues.

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- Surveys of special education students
- District policy manual
- Area Education Agency personnel
- Individual education programs
- student records

Meets requirements

The steering committee concluded all children receive services in the least restrictive environment with the supports they need for their successful participation in the general curriculum.

Validation Results

Meets Requirements

Through interview and a review of student records the monitoring team agrees with the areas identified as meeting the requirements for least restrictive environment as concluded by the steering committee.